



COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS SITE VISIT

Background. In November 2015, representatives from Iowa's Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches participated in a 50-state forum on improving outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system. The forum was sponsored by the Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG) and the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

As a result of its participation in the conference, Iowa has an opportunity to qualify for intensive technical assistance from the CSG to assist in the development of a comprehensive statewide plan to improve outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system. Technical assistance is provided at no cost to the state. The development of a plan will allow Iowa to compete for up to \$1.0 million in federal funding for implementation. The CSG provides technical assistance that includes the following components:

- Analyzing quantitative data.
- Reviewing policy and practice.
- Presenting state-specific policy and practice recommendations.

Iowa is one of eight finalists being considered to receive the technical assistance, but only three states will be selected. The final selections will be made in April 2016. To be considered, states must submit a letter stating their interest and commitment to the following:

- Establishing a bipartisan, inter-branch task force to guide the effort.
- Sharing available data from the juvenile justice and other service systems.
- Improving policy and practice across the juvenile justice continuum, from diversion to reentry.

If Iowa is selected, a task force will be formed to oversee the development of the 9-month to 12-month planning process. The task force will be comprised of lawmakers, Executive Branch officials selected by Governor Branstad, judicial leaders, and local government partners.

Site Visit. On March 14 and 15, 2016, representatives from the CSG conducted a site visit in Iowa to assess Iowa's readiness and commitment to develop the statewide plan. The site visit included:

- A presentation for Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branch leaders on what works to reduce recidivism and how a coordinated approach of all three branches of government will improve outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Discussions with small groups to determine Iowa's challenges and key opportunities for improving outcomes for youth; and
- Assessments, with state leaders, of the interest, capacity, data, and political support necessary to take advantage of the technical assistance opportunity.

More Information. For more information on the CSG, visit their [website](#).

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